

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 07338 110839Z
ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4268
INFO USUN NEWYORK 1029

UNCLAS CANBERRA 7338

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AORG, AS
SUBJ: CABINET-LEVEL SALARIES

REF: STATE 225011; STATE 228996

1. BASIC SALARY FOR AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL CABINET OFFICERS IS \$60,590 (ALL FIGURES ARE IN U.S. DOLLARS). OF THIS, \$10,386 IS AN "ELECTORAL ALLOWANCE", SINCE ALL CABINET MINISTERS ARE, BY LAW, MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT. THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GETS \$68,710, AND THE PRIME MINISTER \$92,483. (SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE MAY BE SOME VARIATIONS IN CABINET SALARIES, SINCE THE ELECTORAL ALLOWANCE IS SCALED TO THE SIZE OF THE ELECTORATE.)

2. UNDER AUSTRALIAN LAW, ALL INCOME (WHETHER ALLOWANCES OR OTHERWISE) IS COUNTED AS "INCOME" AND IS TAXED ACCORDINGLY. CABINET MEMBERS HAVE NO SPECIAL EXEMPTIONS. THEY MAY, HOWEVER, DEDUCT FROM THEIR INCOME THAT PORTION OF THEIR ALLOWANCES WHICH "IS SPENT FOR THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT WAS APPROPRIATED." UNDER AUSTRALIAN PRACTICE, THERE ARE RELATIVELY FEW OTHER DEDUCTIONS - UNLIKE AMERICAN PRACTICE. THUS FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES, A CABINET MINISTER EARNING \$60,590 MIGHT END UP HAVING AS MUCH AS \$1500 DEDUCTIBLE, BUT NOT MUCH MORE (SUCH THINGS AS INTEREST PAYMENTS ON MORTGAGES AND OTHER CREDIT PURCHASES ARE NOT DEDUCTIBLE). AS A FURTHER MATTER OF INTEREST, AUSTRALIA HAS ONLY THREE TAX RATES: 33-1/2 PERCENT ON INCOME BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 CANBER 07338 110839Z

\$4000-\$18,000; 47-1/2 PERCENT ON INCOME BETWEEN \$18,000 AND \$36,000; AND 61-1/2 PERCENT FROM \$33,000 UPWARDS.
ALSTON

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Message Attributes

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